

December 30, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
December 18, 1959, on the train en route from Toulon to Paris

Others present: Secretary Herter
Mr. Merchant
Mr. Kohler
General Goodpaster
Mr. Hagerty

The President opened the discussion by asking what decisions it was thought would need to be reached in the Paris meetings, were the Heads of Governments supposed to agree, for example, on the time, the agenda, and the basic policy positions for a summit meeting. Mr. Herter said he did not envisage much work on policy positions. At this stage, the development of these should be left to working groups, particularly if we try to set out new positions. These would leak to the press, and we would lose any benefit from them. He thought the agenda should be stated in very general terms. He outlined a series of topics, which included "aid to the underdeveloped countries." The President said he had reservations about this formulation. First, he thought it should read "relations with the underdeveloped countries," inasmuch as all the obligation should not be on the side of the industrial countries. He agreed that disarmament should be a major topic for discussion.

Regarding Berlin, he asked if there had been any softening on the part of Adenauer. Mr. Herter said there had not -- that there had been a hardening of German attitude, in fact. The Germans and French are taking an adamant stand. The President said that he felt he committed the U.S. at the Camp David talks to discuss the Berlin and German questions seriously, and he intended to do so.

Mr. Merchant commented that the State Department feels we should not resume our negotiations on Berlin and Germany on the basis of the last position we had put forward in Geneva. Instead, we should start again from our "peace plan for Germany." The President said he liked, in principle, the idea of a proposal for a plebiscite.

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He asked whether it was envisaged there would be any talk on nuclear testing at the summit. Mr. Herter said he thought not. The French said they will walk out of the summit meetings if there is discussion of testing. The President said he is getting a little weary of the stand some of the European countries are taking, and that we might find ourselves walking out on some occasions.

The furor caused by Gen. Twining's statement was next discussed. The President read through the statement and said it looked alright to him, although he saw that an interpretation could be read into it that Gen. Twining was calling on the military authorities to exert pressure on the political echelons of government.

Referring to his meetings in Paris, the President said he would want a list of topics on which he should be prepared to talk at the Three-power and the Four-power meetings. On the topic of disarmament, he said he saw some merit in the proposal for the five Western countries included in the UN committee of ten to meet separately to develop a Western position.

The discussion next turned to bilateral questions. Mr. Herter said Chancellor Adenauer was likely to raise the question of German assets. The Germans are proposing that, by Executive Order, the President transfer funds on paper from the repayments due the GARIOA account to the German assets account. The President said that the manner in which such a transfer is made is an internal question with which the Germans have no proper concern, and that he would propose to follow the treaty process. Mr. Herter suggested that the President might tell General De Gaulle of his exchange of letters with Khrushchev regarding the threatening situation in the Far East, following the Camp David talks. The President agreed that this could be mentioned.

Regarding the discussions in the NATO meetings of the preceding few days, Mr. Herter said that these had gone very well. Mr. Merchant reported that the 10-year planning project has been laid on. MC 70 has not been explicitly placed under review, but implicitly is to be re-studied in the process of evaluating future requirements. Present cost sharing practices also are to be reviewed.


The President gave Mr. Herter a thumb nail appraisal of the jobs being

SECRET

done by the U.S. Ambassadors he had just seen. He thought Rountree, Bunker and Walmsley were doing a fine job. He thought that Byroade works too hard and is something of a worrier. He was not favorably impressed in Rome.

The President asked that Mr. Herter put someone to work on an evaluation of the significance of the President's trip. The questions uppermost in his mind, and the points to be developed, concern the advances that have been made in the free world's interests by the trip, the great friendship for America that he found, the appeal and tremendous acceptance of the notions of peace, the question as to what work we must do in order to advance the prospect of peace, in freedom and with justice, and the great reservoir of knowledge on the part of the people visited that the U.S. is with them in aspirations and concern. Primarily his trip was a trip of peace and good will. It has given him, however, some knowledge of the needs of the people in these areas. He has now seen the squalor and primitive living arrangements. He was greatly impressed by the tremendous dedication of the governments of these countries to the improvement of the living conditions of their people.

Coming back to the meetings in Paris, he asked for succinct papers covering the date for the East-West meeting, the subjects for that meeting, and the stands we should take on each subject. Mr. Herter reiterated that he would have working groups develop the stands we should take. However, some broad guidance from the Paris discussions would be most valuable.


A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA

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